

AIR WAR COLLEGE

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FORGETTING THE LESSONS OF VIETNAM:

ARMY FORCE STRUCTURE CHANGES AS A RESULT OF
REDUCED BUDGETS

by

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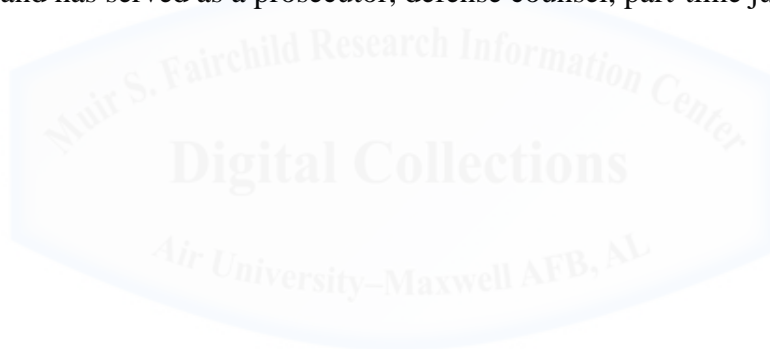
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Biography

Lieutenant Colonel Matthew Cooper is assigned to the Air War College, Air University, Maxwell AFB, AL. He has served as the senior fulltime Judge Advocate for the Washington National Guard and legal advisor to the Adjutant General of the state of Washington for more than 10 years. Prior to those duties he served as a military prosecutor and as the legal advisor to commanders of Stryker and Armor brigades on both active duty and in the Army National Guard.

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Abstract

To meet sequestration budget requirements for fiscal year 2018, General Odierno, then Army Chief of Staff, proposed significant cuts to Army National Guard force structure. His plan to cut heavily from the Guard to preserve active force structure is contrary to how the Army has handled past budget reductions. Since 1974, the Army absorbed budget cuts by moving force structure from the active force to the Army Reserve and National Guard. Maintaining that same force structure in the reserve components costs 80% less than on active duty.

Outcry over the plan from Governors and Congress led to the creation of the National Commission on the Future of the Army which was tasked with objectively reviewing the Army's plans to rebalance force structure. The Commission's recent report recommends against most of the Army's planned cuts to the National Guard.

Despite having a new Army Chief of Staff and a commission report recommending cuts elsewhere, the Army has yet to form a plan to meet sequestration budgets that doesn't rely heavily on cuts to the Army National Guard. Significant cuts to the Army National Guard will have long-term effects on the Army and the nation. The planned cuts degrade the Army's capability reducing its surge capacity. Surge capacity for military operations is increasingly important for national defense with the historically small size of the active military force. Most importantly, the cuts to the Army National Guard will undo the Total Force Policy, making it easier for the president to go to war without first setting an end state and seeking the support of Congress and the American people.

In May of 1968, a young Army Captain returned to the United States after serving a year in Vietnam. He felt such a strong animosity from his countrymen that he was ashamed to wear his uniform in public.¹ His fellow citizens blamed him for events in Vietnam because the public saw the American Soldier, not the American president, as the face of the Vietnam War.

The Total Force policy, implemented by General Creighton Abrams, changed how the country viewed its military. In less than two generations, the military rose from being one of the least respected institutions in the country to being one of the most respected. General Abrams created the Total Force Policy as a way to restructure the Army in the wake of the Vietnam War. The policy's purpose was twofold: first, to maximize the capability of the Army on a shrinking budget, and secondly, to prevent the country from getting involved in future military conflicts without the support of the president, Congress and the public. Army leaders of today are heading in the opposite direction that General Abrams took when faced with similar types of decisions.

Tinkering with the foundations of the policy forty years after its creation may seem inconsequential, but it will lead to changes that undermine something the military, military members and veterans take for granted today: strong and open support from the American public. This essay will argue that the Army's current plans to cut Army National Guard force structure have long-term consequences that have not been adequately considered by today's Army leaders.

The Army's current plan is to meet sequestration budget targets by cutting force structure from the National Guard. These cuts will have long-term negative effects on the country because it rebalances Army force structure in ways that will allow civilian leaders to commit military

forces to conflicts without gathering Congressional or public support and will also reduce the Army's overall capability.

This essay will provide a historical perspective on Total Force policy (also known as the Abrams Doctrine) and the reasoning and purposes behind the policy's establishment. By assessing recent conflicts, it will demonstrate that the current force structure balance between the Army and National Guard compels the president to carefully evaluate getting involved in large military conflicts and to spend political capital convincing the nation going to war is in its best interests. The Army's plan to balance its budget by reducing National Guard force structure will reduce the Army's dependence on the National Guard for combat forces and make it easier for the president to go to war without first gaining the support of Congress and the people. Removing the safeguards built into the Total Force policy will return the country and our civil-military relations to in the same conditions that existed prior to the Vietnam War.

General Creighton Abrams, the 26th Chief of Staff of the Army, graduated from West Point in 1936.² During WWII, he was a battalion and then a regimental commander under General Patton.³ He served in the Korean War, before becoming Vice Chief of Staff of the Army, Deputy Commander in Vietnam and then Commander of US forces in Vietnam before being named Chief of Staff.⁴

Following Vietnam, Congress ended the draft and made large cuts to the Army's budget and end strength. In fiscal year 1974, Army strength was reduced from 825,000 Soldiers to 785,000, which was about half the size it had been five years earlier.⁵ Making the switch from the draft to an all-volunteer force in 1974 created uncertainty about whether enough volunteers could be recruited to fill the Army's needs.⁶

These Congressionally forced changes created an opportunity to restructure the Army. As Chief of Staff, General Abrams seized the opportunity to make the Army better able to meet the challenges of future conflicts and serve as a greater conventional deterrence during the Cold War. He also made changes that he believed would prevent the country from becoming engaged in another conflict like the Vietnam War.

General Abrams saw the poor outcome of the war in Vietnam as being caused by the way the civilian and military leadership made decisions about the war; not by the military's performance in the conflict. He believed that civilian leaders had not been committed to the cause of the war and so had taken a series of half-measures to prosecute the war.⁷ One example of a half-measure was President Johnson's twice denying the Army's requests to mobilize National Guard and Reserve units for service in Vietnam.⁸

Mobilizing the Guard and Reserves would have required the president to influence members of Congress and the public to support his decision. President Johnson did not want to spend his political capital on seeking support for mobilizing the Guard and Reserves. He wanted to keep the war in Vietnam on a low profile so he could spend his political capital pursuing his Great Society domestic legislative agenda.⁹ The politics of increasing the draft were much easier than calling up the Guard and Reserves.

General Abrams saw President Johnson's aversion to mobilizing the Guard and Reserves as a lack of civilian leadership's commitment to the military and the conflict. Abrams believed that without the full commitment of civilian leadership the country would not be successful in a military conflict.¹⁰

One of Abrams' goals in changing the force structure balance of the Army was to alter the civil-military relations equation in favor of the military.¹¹ His Total Force policy put civilian leaders in a position where they would need to use the reserves when engaging in any significant military action.¹² The need to use the Guard and Reserves drives the process of gathering political and popular support for military action. This aspect of the policy sought to force civilian leaders to make more careful decisions about using military force.¹³ Calling up the reserves would require spending political capital, publically investing in the decision to use the military, and developing public support for the action.¹⁴ Engagement with Congress and the public would require civilian leaders to clearly articulate their strategy and goals before engaging in a conflict.

The need to mobilize the Reserves and Guard for any significant operation would ensure a dialogue between the President, Congress and the American people.¹⁵ Abrams hoped this dialogue would result in sound decisions about engaging in military conflicts and that those decisions would be supported by civilian leaders and the American people.¹⁶

Under the budget restrictions imposed by the 2011 Budget Control Act ("BCA," also known as sequestration) the Army must cut force structure to meet lower budget and end strength requirements. The Army has proposed cutting force structure from the National Guard in order to pay for maintaining force structure on active duty.

The end strength of the active Army has varied somewhat over the past 30 years. The most recent large-scale reduction was at the end of the Cold War and Gulf War in 1992. In the last half of the 1990's, the end strength stabilized at 480,000.¹⁷ During the Iraq War, active Army end strength peaked at 570,000.¹⁸ The Army proposes to return to an active end strength

similar to what it had prior to the Global War on Terror, but plans to have more combat power within that end strength.¹⁹

The end strength of the Army National Guard has stayed at basically the same for the last 30 years at 350,000.²⁰ During the Global War on Terror the Army Guard grew only slightly to a peak of 358,000.²¹ The Army plan proposes to reduce the Guard's end strength to 315,000 in FY 2018 and use the savings to pay for maintaining more end strength in the active force.²² This would be the smallest end strength for the Army National Guard since 1953.²³

Today's Army leaders propose to cut the nation's overall combat capability in order to preserve small gains in active duty Army end strength by returning active Army end strength to 2001 level and cutting the National Guard to a level not seen since the early 1950s. When faced with fiscal conditions very similar to those the Army faced immediately after Vietnam, today's Army leaders are heading in the opposite direction taken by General Abrams.

The cuts planned by Army leaders would undo the change General Abrams implemented to ensure civilian leaders would be committed any future large-scale military conflict. Finding a way to quantify civilian leaders' commitment to a decision to use military force is not simple. It involves estimating how much a president or congressional leader is willing to tie his or her political future to the perceived success or failure of use of military force. Military operations that are perceived to be just and achieve the stated objectives are seen as successful. Civilian leaders tied closely to successful military operations see their political fortunes improve, while those tied to unsuccessful operations see their political fortunes fall.

A bellwether test of a civilian leader's commitment to the use of military force is the decision to call up members of the reserve components for a conflict. Calling Reserve and

Guard members for duty in a conflict is a significant test of a civilian leader's resolve.

Mobilizing members of the reserve components receives significant attention from members of Congress as they field increasing numbers of constituent issues that arise when citizen soldiers leave their families and civilian employment for full-time military service. The media also gives significant coverage to mobilizations of reserve component members. Presidents know they will have to spend time and effort dealing with Congress, the media and the public if they mobilize the reserve components.

A Presidential decision to mobilize members of the reserves, combined with the Congressional and media attention engages the public and affects public opinion. Having friends, family members, co-workers or neighbors being ordered to military duty raises the profile of the decision to use military force in the eyes of the public.

Over the last 25 years, the country has been involved in four conflicts that demonstrate differing results based on the level of civilian leaders' commitment to the conflict. The willingness to mobilize the reserves can be used as a yardstick to gauge the level of civilian leadership commitment. Calling up the Reserves and National Guard doesn't guarantee military success or political support, but it does force the president to make his best case to Congress and the American public for using military force. The Gulf War, Somalia, Afghanistan and Iraq demonstrate that civilian leaders' commitment to a conflict results in broader, longer lasting public support for the conflict, the military itself and increased chances for military success.

The effort and political capital that President George H.W. Bush invested in gathering Congressional and public support for the Gulf War paid off with high levels of public support throughout and following the conflict. President Bush's response to the 1991 Iraqi invasion of Kuwait was a large-scale operation that served to redefine how the United States engaged in

military conflicts after Vietnam. Much of the redefinition happened because of the way President Bush approached the conflict and how he engaged Congress and the American people. President Bush showed his commitment to the operation by talking directly to the American public. Unlike Vietnam, when the media led most of the discussion about the war, the president and other civilian and military leaders led the discussions of the Gulf War. The President also engaged Congress by requesting, lobbying for and obtaining an authorization for the use of military force against Iraq.²⁴

Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm required the call-up of hundreds of thousands of reservists. The Secretary of Defense authorized the services to call up to 360,000 reservists to active duty.²⁵ Some 228,000 were mobilized for the operation and 106,000 served in the combat zone.²⁶

President Bush's mobilizing of significant portions of the reserve component, consulting with Congress and explaining his reasoning directly to the American people through the media, showed his commitment to the use of military force. The public responded with high levels of support for the use of force against Iraq.²⁷ At the conclusion of the 100 hours of combat, 89% of the American public approved of President Bush's handling of the Gulf War.²⁸ This set an all-time high for presidential approval ratings.²⁹ By comparison, 87% of Americans approved of President Truman's handling of the war at the end of WWII.³⁰

At the opposite end of the spectrum is the US operation in Somalia in the early 1990s. Somalia is an example of a conflict where the president and civilian leaders did not invest political capital in the decision to use military force. Given the small scale of the military operations in Somalia, the Guard and Reserves were not operationally necessary. Had their use been required, it would have forced President Bush to build Congressional and public support in

ways similar to the Gulf War. Lacking this political obstacle allowed the president to engage in a military operations where the strategy and end state were not fixed or articulated. If the Army goes forward with current plans to alter the force structure, it will make the Somalia model of presidential decision-making more probable.

Coming off the military success in Kuwait, the Bush administration faced growing humanitarian issues in Somalia. The civil war, starvation and humanitarian conditions in Somalia hit crisis levels in 1992, when the United Nations authorized the international community to take action to counter the widespread famine in the country.

In the initial phases of the relief, warlords and factions in Somalia intercepted U.N. food shipments. They prevented relief supplies from reaching those in need and used the supplies to further their conflict.³¹ President Bush approved sending US forces to Somalia to secure relief supplies and ensure relief shipments made it to starving Somalis.³² The contingent of US forces sent to Somalia was small compared to the number of forces deployed for Operation Desert Shield/Storm, so no reserve components were mobilized.³³

Operations in Somalia presented several challenges to the Bush administration. Unlike Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm, the president did not spend as much time engaging the media or the public about operations in Somalia. The crisis happened in the midst of a presidential campaign that wasn't going well for the incumbent.³⁴ Secretary of State James Baker left office to help President Bush's re-election campaign at a crucial time in diplomatic efforts to avoid the use of military force in Somalia.³⁵ The administration itself was divided on whether Somalia was a mission the United States ought to be involved with.³⁶ The combination of these issues and the lack of need for any reserve component call-ups kept the Bush administration from rallying the nation and public opinion behind US intervention in Somalia.

Following his unsuccessful re-election bid, President Bush sent US forces to Somalia in early December 1992, with the publicly stated hope they would be home before the inauguration of President Clinton in January 1993.³⁷ Even though President Bush didn't spend a lot of time and effort garnering public support for the Somalia operation, it enjoyed the support of 74% of the public.³⁸

In President Clinton's first few months in office, the operations in Somalia were a low priority for the new president. Press coverage of President Clinton's first 100 days in office hardly mentioned the mission in Somalia.³⁹ The new president was concentrating on the priorities he campaigned on, mostly domestic economic issues (he ran on the line "It's the economy, stupid!") and healthcare reform.⁴⁰ He did not invest time engaging the public about Somalia or invest any political capital in the conflict he inherited from his predecessor.

As the mission stretched on, the distribution of humanitarian aid became more effective. The US forces then shifted focus to dealing with the warring factions causing the instability in Somalia: the warlords and their key leaders. This phase of the mission was meant to bring more safety and stability to Somalia by killing or capturing warlords and their key leaders.

During the spring and summer of 1993, the Somalia mission only came to the attention of the public in the occasional news reports of casualties suffered by American and UN forces. As the mission wore on and the new president focused on domestic issues, there was little public discussion of the mission and public support started to wane.⁴¹ Polls showed that the public's support for the mission had dropped from 74% in December 1992 to 43% in September 1993.⁴²

In early October 1993, an operation to capture two of warlord Muhamad Farrah Aideed's top advisors was ambushed and the Battle of Mogadishu ensued. Ultimately the fight ended with

22 Americans killed, 73 wounded and one captured.⁴³ In the days immediately after the battle, President Clinton announced that all American forces would be withdrawn from Somalia. After the battle, public support for the operation dropped further to thirty four percent.⁴⁴ But it was not the battle that caused the loss of support. That support had eroded over the summer prior to the battle.

Operations in Somalia and the Battle of Mogadishu show that the civilian leadership's commitment to the use of military force drives public opinion. Gepi, Feaver and Reifler observed,

First, Somalia confirms that if the president (and by extension the rest of the political elite) does not attempt to mobilize public support in the midst of a costly military operation, then the public support will not be sustained very long. There was one important audience that was deeply phobic, reacting immediately and reflexively to the sight of bodies being dragged through the streets of Mogadishu: the president, his closest advisors and members of Congress. They all lost whatever political will they had remaining for the Somalia mission after the Ranger raid and they made no attempt to frame the casualties as the necessary price for victory and thereby tap in to the reservoir of public support that might otherwise have been available.⁴⁵

This loss of political will has continued to cause problems for the nation even today. Withdrawing troops from Somalia as a result of the Battle of Mogadishu was a clear manifestation of the administration's lack of commitment to the operation and an unwillingness to try to gather public support for the operation. This sent the wrong message to US enemies like Slobodan Milosevic, Saddam Hussein, and Osama Bin Laden.⁴⁶ After watching what happened in Somalia, each of them believed America would avoid conflict or retreat at the first battle casualty.⁴⁷

After studying operations in Somalia, Gepi, Feaver and Reifler believe the data supports the position that “the public supports missions that are successful, not necessarily those that are cost-free.”⁴⁸ “Somalia affirms that the public is defeat phobic rather than casualty phobic.”⁴⁹ Had Presidents Bush and Clinton invested political capital in the Somalia operation, public support could have sustained US operations in the wake of the Battle of Mogadishu, leading to a successful outcome. A successful outcome in the Somalia mission would not have led our enemies to assume we are discouraged by strategically minor military losses. A successful mission in Somalia could have changed the way our enemies saw us and predicted our behavior. This could have led to different decisions when they considered our actions in Bosnia, Iraq and responding to terrorist attacks.

The wars in Afghanistan and Iraq are grouped together because they share many similarities. In both operations, civilian leaders in the White House and Congress exhibited significant indications of commitment to the use of military force.

The case for military action in Afghanistan was made very publically and tied directly to the attacks on September 11, 2001. The President spoke often of the need to use force against those who attacked the country. The media covered the military situation in Afghanistan in great detail starting shortly after September 11th. In response, Congress passed an authorization for the use of military force.⁵⁰

The case for using military force in Iraq was not related as directly to the September 11th terrorist attacks, but President George W. Bush and his administration made a very public case for using force against Iraq. The debate preceding the use of military force in Iraq received even more attention domestically and internationally than did the decision to using force in Afghanistan. The public strongly supported both wars at their start. More than 90% of the

public was in favor of using military force in Afghanistan in the fall of 2001.⁵¹ More than 70% of the public supported using military force in Iraq in March, 2003.⁵²

Both wars required the call-up of large numbers of reserve component members. Of the 2.6 million individual deployments across all components of the US military who have served in combat zones since 2001, 525,000 have been Army National Guard members.⁵³ Army National Guard members have accounted for two-thirds of all individual deployments from the Army's reserve components.⁵⁴

Despite the length of these wars and the significant number of casualties⁵⁵ suffered in both theaters, public support has continued. The war in Iraq maintained public support by a majority, or near majority, through the first three years of the war.⁵⁶ Public support declined to 35%-45% and remained constant through the conclusion of the war.⁵⁷ The war in Afghanistan has maintained support from a majority of the public for 13 of the last 14 years (support dipped to 48% in 2014, but increased to 54% in 2015).⁵⁸

Public support for military actions is driven in large part by the actions of our civilian leaders. The Total Force policy forces civilian leaders to invest in a decision to use military force. All four conflicts demonstrate that when civilian leaders are committed to the use of military force, the operation will enjoy broader, longer-lasting public support. Operations with broader public support are perceived as more successful than those operations lacking public support.⁵⁹ The Gulf War serves as a high watermark of success in recent military history, whereas Somalia serves as an example of how not to engage in military action.

Civil-military policy issues aside, there are also practical, budget-driven reasons for preserving or increasing the force structure in the reserve components; specifically in the Army

National Guard. The lower cost of maintaining force structure and military capability in the reserve components allows the nation to preserve military capability with smaller budgets.

When General Abrams designed the Total Force Doctrine in the early 1970s, he too was dealing with drastic budget cuts while preparing the Army to meet the defense challenges of the Cold War. Abrams' solution to these challenges was to place the majority of combat and support capability into the reserve components. His restructuring allowed the country to meet national security needs on a shrinking budget.

Today, cost is the most important driver in deciding whether to keep or cut Army force structure. In 2013, the Department of Defense's Director of Cost Assessment and Program Evaluation (CAPE) compared the cost of the active Army and the Army National Guard in a study for Congress.⁶⁰ The study used several methods to compare costs to ensure policy-makers had meaningful and accurate comparisons with which to make decisions.

The first method compared personnel costs. When looking at the full cost of personnel — including training and retirement costs — a National Guard Soldier costs approximately 15% of what an active duty Soldier costs.⁶¹ Even when mobilized, Army National Guard Soldiers still cost up to 20% less than an active duty Soldier because of their lower retirement costs.⁶² National Guard and Reserve Soldiers' retirements cost less because they do not collect pay or benefits immediately upon retirement, but must generally wait till age 60 to collect retirement pay and benefits.

A second method compared the costs of similar units in the Army and Army National Guard. The CAPE study compared the costs of training and deploying Guard and active infantry brigades. The study found the lower personnel costs of the National Guard made training a

Guard brigade cost 25% of training an active duty brigade. Deploying a National Guard infantry brigade cost 50% less than deploying an active duty brigade.⁶³

National Guard Soldiers are paid to train for the equivalent of 39 days each year which costs substantially less than the 365 days a year active duty Soldiers are paid for. Guard units and members do have lower levels of readiness because of the limited number of training days available, but this gap in readiness is closed with intensive training upon mobilization. Despite training for far fewer days each year, when mobilized a National Guard unit can catch up to the required active duty readiness standards in a couple of months. While there is a significant savings in deploying a National Guard brigade, the need to deploy a National Guard brigade must be predicted many months to a year in advance of the need for boots on the ground.

A third method looked at the overall budget. The analysis of the Army's overall budget showed that the reserve component personnel costs accounted for only 3.4% of the Army's personnel budget.⁶⁴ National Guard contained about half of the combat power of the Army, but only accounted for about 10% of Army spending.⁶⁵ The other half of combat power residing in the active duty Army consumes nearly all of the Army's budget.

The relative costs of Guard and the active component mean that the Army will have to make drastic cuts to the Guard to pay for keeping more force structure on active duty. The Army would need to cut at least four National Guard Soldiers to pay for keeping one additional Soldier on active duty. Looking at the larger force structure, the Army would need to cut a division's worth of National Guard brigades to keep one additional brigade on active duty. These planned cuts would leave the Army National Guard smaller than at any time since before the Korean War.

Rebalancing the force structure in the way the Army plans to meet the sequestration budgets will cause a relative shift in combat power from the National Guard to the active Army. A re-balanced Army would contain a larger percentage of combat power on active duty. Putting more force structure in the active Army is contrary to the Total Force policy. It would mean that civilian leaders would not need to look to the reserve component – and not commit political capital or gather public support – when considering engaging in conflict because the active force would contain more capability and the Guard and Reserves less.

The Total Force policy serves several purposes, one of them being a firewall for decisions on engaging in large military conflicts. Dr. Jeffrey Record summarized this aspect of the doctrine: “Though the Total Force Policy served other purposes, its key objective, satisfied by transferring the bulk of combat service and combat service support functions from the active to the reserve components, was to prevent future presidents from going to war without having to clear the domestic political hurdle of a reserve call-up.”⁶⁶ While Dr. Record speaks specifically about the support functions transferred to the Army Reserves, the same is true for the combat power transferred to the Army National Guard.

History shows that presidents who don’t need to mobilize the reserve component have the ability engage in conflicts without having to rally Congressional or public support. The preparations required for a president to engage Congress and the public to explain a decision to use military compel an articulation why the use of military forces is necessary. Those preparations also require a president to clearly state the goals of using military force. Conflicts that begin with clear goals and strategy are less likely to become conflicts like Vietnam.

When civilian leaders are committed to a conflict, as evidenced by consultation with Congress and a dialog with the public, the public will continue to support a war even if it is

prolonged and causes significant American casualties. Leaders that show commitment and resolve for a conflict engender the same attitudes in the civilian populace.

Using military force without a reserve call-up allows civilian leaders to skip one of the toughest conversations with the American public: why it should support the decision to send military forces into a conflict. Without a call-up of reserve component members, there is no need for citizens to talk about why it is necessary for their family, friends, neighbors and co-workers to leave their civilian lives and employment to take part in a military conflict.

The Total Force policy shifted the Army forces necessary to fight wars into the reserve components. By the Abrams Doctrine's design, the Army placed half of its combat forces into the Army National Guard and the vast majority of support capability into the Army Reserves. The Army's Fiscal Year 2018 plan to meet sequestration budget requirements undoes the Total Force balance by shifting the majority of combat power to the active component. These actions will enable the active Army to engage in higher levels of conflict without resorting to the National Guard and Reserves. This rebalanced force will allow civilian leaders to engage forces in greater levels of conflict without greater levels of commitment. The planned cuts will reduce the Army's overall capability by cutting its surge capacity. Cutting National Guard force structure also will reduce the country's ability to conduct vital homeland security and domestic support to civil authorities' missions. Local and state officials, as well as the American public, have come to rely upon the Guard to help after hurricanes, tornados, floods and any other disaster or emergency.

The indirect consequences of the Army's planned cuts will be greater and longer lasting than the direct consequences. Putting civilian leaders in a position to more easily engage in conflicts without being fully committed to them is bad for the country and for the Army.

Degraded levels of public support for both the military and military operations could keep leaders from taking actions vital to national security.

There is a litany of other potential consequences as well. The citizens and lawmakers of this country currently hold the military and military members in high regard. This is significantly different than the standing the military held in the 1970s. This high regard translates into Department of Defense's ability to address policy issues that involve the services, military members, military families and veterans. Quality of medical and mental healthcare, substance abuse, homelessness and other quality of life issues for veterans and military members currently receive broad support and legislative action. If the public and Congressional support for the military wanes, the will and ability to address these important issues will also diminish.

Today, the young Captain who returned from Vietnam is a retired Colonel and also my father-in-law. He distinctly remembers the way he and other Vietnam veterans were treated upon their return.⁶⁷ The stigma that came with Vietnam service left an invisible, but lifelong mark on him and everyone in his generation who served. The treatment of service members and veterans today is at the opposite end of the spectrum. He finds being thanked for his service today touches a nerve that was aggravated 45 years ago. The recognition of his and others' service is gratifying, but it still reminds him of the days when public sentiment made him ashamed to wear his uniform.

Ensuring ongoing support for the military services and military members requires that today's Army leaders continue to follow the roadmap that brought us from the dark days following Vietnam to the present. Maintaining or increasing Army National Guard force structure during tough fiscal times keeps us on the proven course laid out by General Abrams. Significantly reducing Army National Guard force structure to pay for additions to active Army

force structure is a wrong turn that would put the country on a return path to a place we left forty years ago.



Notes.

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³ Ibid., 39, 89.

⁴ Ibid., 125-126, 179, 229.

⁵ Ibid., 186, 365.

⁶ Ibid., 268, 346.

⁷ Ibid., 363-364.

⁸ Ibid., 185, 221.

⁹ Ibid., 183-185.

¹⁰ Ibid., 364.

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Ron Jensen, "A Lesson Learned," *National Guard*, November 2012, 33-34.

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ Sorley, *Thunderbolt*, 364

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¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ Ibid.

²² Major General Timothy Reisch, Testimony before the Commission on the Future of the Army, "Written Testimony on Proposed Budget Cuts." 28 August 2015,
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²⁴ Joint Resolution to Authorize the Use of United States Armed Forces Pursuant to United Nations Security Council Resolution 678, Public Law 1, 102nd Cong, 1st session (14 January 1991).

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- ³³ Ibid., 9.
- ³⁴ Ibid.
- ³⁵ Ibid.
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- ³⁸ Feaver and Gelpi, *Choosing Your Battles*, 38.
- ³⁹ Editorial, "Bill Clinton's Hundred Days" *New York Times*, 29 April 1993.
- ⁴⁰ Ibid.
- ⁴¹ Christopher Gelpi, Peter D. Feaver and Jason Reifler, *Paying the Human Costs of War: American Public Opinion & Casualties in Military Conflicts*, (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2009), 38.
- ⁴² Ibid.
- ⁴³ Stewart, *The U.S. Army in Somalia*, 23.
- ⁴⁴ Ibid.
- ⁴⁵ Ibid., 38-39.
- ⁴⁶ Gelpi, Feaver and Reifler, *Paying the Human Costs of War*, 5.
- ⁴⁷ Ibid.
- ⁴⁸ Ibid., 39.
- ⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁰ Authorization for the Use of Military Force, Public Law 40, 107th Cong, 1st session (14 September 2001).

⁵¹ Feaver and Gelpi, *Choosing Your Battles*, 189.

⁵² Pew Research Center, “Public Attitudes Toward the War in Iraq: 2003-2008,” Pewresearch.org, 19 March 2008, <http://www.pewresearch.org/2008/03/19/public-attitudes-toward-the-war-in-iraq-20032008/>.

⁵³ National Guard Bureau, *2015 Army National Guard Posture Statement*, (Washington DC: Department of Defense, 2015), 15, <http://www.nationalguard.mil/portals/31/Documents/PostureStatements/2015%20National%20Guard%20Bureau%20Posture%20Statement.pdf>

Rajiv Chandrasekaran, *A Legacy of Pain and Pride*, Washington Post, 29 March 2014, <http://www.washingtonpost.com/sf/national/2014/03/29/a-legacy-of-pride-and-pain/>

⁵⁴ Ibid.

⁵⁵ As of 8 February 2016, there have been 4,495 U.S. casualties in Iraq and 2,381 U.S. casualties in Afghanistan, Icasualties.org, accessed 8 February 2016, <http://icasualties.org/>.

⁵⁶ Gallup Polls, “Iraq,” Gallup.com, accessed 8 February 2016, <http://www.gallup.com/poll/1633/iraq.aspx>.

⁵⁷ Ibid.

⁵⁸ Gallup Polls, “Afghanistan,” Gallup.com, accessed 8 February 2016, www.gallup.com/poll/116233/afghanistan.aspx.

⁵⁹ The perception of the Gulf War may have changed over the years. More recently, there have been arguments that the first Gulf War was not successful as it left Saddam Hussein in power with the ability to continue to cause problems on the world stage. If the U.S. had removed Saddam and his government in 1991, it would have negated the need for the 2003 Iraq War.

⁶⁰ Department of Defense, Director Cost Assessment and Program Evaluation, Report to Congress, *Unit Cost and Readiness for the Active and Reserve Components of the Armed Forces*, (Washington DC; Department of Defense, December 2013).

⁶¹ Ibid., 31.

⁶² Ibid., 23.

⁶³ Ibid., 25.

⁶⁴ Commission on the Future of the Army, *Final Report*, 121.

⁶⁵ National Guard Association of the United States, “Issue: Leverage the Cost-Effective Guard,” NGAUS.org, accessed 8 February 2016, <http://www.ngaus.org/issues-advocacy/priorities-issues/leverage-cost-effective-guard>.

⁶⁶ Jeffrey Record, *Perils of Reasoning by Historical Analogy: Munich, Vietnam, and American Use of Force Since 1945*, (Maxwell AFB: Center for Strategy and Technology, Air War College, March 1998), 16.

⁶⁷ COL(R) Kevin Ryan, (U.S. Army Judge Advocate), interview by author, 11 December 2015.

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